

Mahasu Pahari

Mahasu Pahari (Takri: ମାହସୁ ପାହାରି) is a Western Pahari (Himachali, Takri: ମାହସୁଲି) language spoken in Himachal Pradesh. It is also known as Mahasui or Mahasuvi. The speaking population is about 1,000,000 (2001). It is more commonly spoken in the Himachal Pradesh, Shimla (Simla) and Solan districts. It is to be known that Shimla and Solan were parts of the old Mahasu district. Himachal Pradesh State on 1 September, 1972 reorganised the districts dissolving Mahasu district. The Solan district was carved out of Solan and Arki tehsils of the then Mahasu district and tehsils of Kandaghat and Nalagarh of the then Shimla District.

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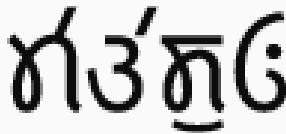
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Area

According to different locations, the language has developed several dialects. Lower Mahasu Pahari (Baghati, Baghiani, Kiunthali), Upper Mahasu Pahari (Rampuri, Rohruri, Naweri, Shimla Siraji, Sodochi). The Kiunthali variety appears to be understood by others, and their attitude toward it is favorable. Rampuri is also called Kochi; Rohruri is also called Soracholi and Sodochi spoken in Kotgarh. Intelligibility among dialects is above 85%. Lexical similarity is 74%–82% with upper dialects, and 74%–95% with lower dialects. The language is used in home and for religious purposes. It is understood and spoken from people of vital age group. The educated are more proficient in Hindi and English. It is considered to be highly endangered as the number of people speaking it is constantly going down. It is closely related to Sirmauri and to Jaunsari.

Script

The native script of the language is a variety of Takri Script. There are some written records of the language in Takri script but nowadays Devanagari script is usually used.

Mahasu Pahari	
ମାହସୁ	Mahasui
	
	Mahasui written in Takri
Native to	India
Region	Himachal Pradesh
Ethnicity	Mahasu
Native speakers	1 million (2002) ^[1] Census results conflate some speakers with Hindi. ^[2]
Language family	Indo-European <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Indo-Iranian ▪ Indo-Aryan ▪ North-Western ▪ Western Pahari (Himachali) ▪ Mahasu Pahari
Writing system	Takri
	Language codes
ISO 639-3	bfz
Glottolog	maha1287 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/oid/id/maha1287) ^[3]

Specimen in Mahasu Pahari (Kiunthali) language

Status

The language is commonly called Pahari or Himachali. The language has no official status and is recorded as dialect of Hindi.^[4] According to the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the language is of definitely endangered category, i.e. many Mahasui children are not learning Mahasui as their mother tongue any longer.^[5] Earlier the language state patronage. Everything changed since independence, due to favoritism towards Hindi by the Indian Government.

The demand for the inclusion of 'Pahari (Himachali)' under the Eight Schedule of the Constitution, which is supposed to represent multiple Pahari languages of Himachal Pradesh, had been made in the year 2010 by the state's Vidhan Sabha.^[6] There has been no positive progress on this matter since then even when small organisations are taking upto themselves to save the language and demanding it.^[7] Due to political interest, the language is currently recorded as a dialect of Hindi, even when having a poor mutual intelligibility with it.

References

1. Mahasu Pahari (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/bfz>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
2. [1] (http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_Data_Online/Language/Statement1.aspx)
3. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Mahasu Pahari" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/maha1287>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
4. "Indian Language Census" (<https://censusindia.gov.in/2011Census/Language-2011/Statement-1.pdf>) (PDF).
5. "Endangered Language (Mahasui)" (<https://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2011/apr/15/language-extinct-endangered>).
6. "Pahari Inclusion" (https://zeenews.india.com/news/himachal-pradesh/hp-for-inclusion-of-pahari-language-in-eighth-schedule_615857.html). Zee News.
7. "Pahari Inclusion" (<https://www.thestatesman.com/cities/demand-for-pahari-as-language-in-8th-schedule-of-constitution-1479046804.html>). *The Statesman*.

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